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WHITE HOUSE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP, G/TIP

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TAGS: [PHUM PREL](#) [KCRM KWMN](#) [SMIG ELAB MU](#)  
SUBJECT: OMAN'S MAJLIS AL-SHURA CONDEMNS TIP REPORT

REF: A. MUSCAT 426  
[1](#)B. MUSCAT 425

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 b/d

[1](#)1. (SBU) On June 14, the Majlis al-Shura, the elected lower house of Oman's bicameral advisory body, issued a statement condemning the 2008 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, specifically accusing the U.S. State Department of issuing "false allegations" about Oman's record on TIP. The Shura's statement linked Oman's Tier 3 ranking in the TIP report to what it described as "failed" USG policies throughout the region, and advised the USG to change its "foreign policies and practices in Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan before accusing others" of not supporting human rights. Local press gave broad coverage to the Shura's reaction, with the weekly Arabic-language daily "Al-Zam" placing its report under a banner headline in red print, "National Unity Against U.S. Report." The Shura's pronouncement also gained attention in the regional press, which up to now has provided almost no coverage of Oman's angry response to the report. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) news service ran an Oman News Agency feed on its official web site suggesting that the anti-U.S. tone of the Majlis al-Shura, "the national platform that represents the Omani society," had broad popular support.

[1](#)2. (C) Comment: The statement by the Majlis al-Shura represented an unprecedented foray by the chamber into foreign affairs, which is normally the exclusive domain of the Sultan and his ministers. Along with the speed that this normally plodding body responded to our report, this indicates that the Shura's actions were almost certainly directed by the government in an attempt to caste its ire in more populist terms. By including its only directly-elected institution in the dispute over its Tier 3 ranking, Oman has signaled its clear intent to continue the campaign against the report. Moreover, it appears to be trying to frame this issue as more than just a political argument between governments, but one that strikes at the core of Oman's national identity. End Comment.  
GRAPPO